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The Dynamic Nationalisation of Voting for United Russia: the Stability / Instability of Regional Deviations from National Results

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Abstract

By the middle of the 2000s an electoral authoritarian regime had been established under Putin, and the Kremlin's "party of power", United Russia (UR) had emerged as the dominant party. Based on the results of Duma and Presidential elections over the period 2003-2016, this article examines cross-regional variation in static and dynamic nationalization of voting for UR. The main finding is that in the overwhelming majority of Russian regions, a high level of static nationalisation is accompanied by a high level of dynamic nationalization. In most of the regions, voting for UR rises or falls in a consistent manner across the elections. Some of the regions consistently vote in favour of UR whilst another group of regions consistently provides UR with poorer results than the national average. Finally, there are some regions which consistently vote very close to the national results, reflecting the national trends in voting for UR to the greatest degree. Cross-regional variations in both static and dynamic nationalization of UR's support are mostly explained by the degree of authoritarianism in Russian regions.

Key words: elections, United Russia, cross-regional variations, static and dynamic party nationalization.

Introduction

As many scholars have stressed, strong party institutions are vital for the long-term stability and healthy functioning of regimes (Mainwaring and Scully 1995, Mainwaring 1998, Pridham and Lewis 1996). One of the key factors of party institutionalisation, which is particularly important in federal states, is the "nationalisation" of parties (Caramani 2004, Kasuya and Moenius 2008, Jones and Mainwaring 2003, Morgenstern, Swindle, and Castagnola 2009, Mustillo, and Mustillo 2012, Golosov 2016). 'Strongly nationalised party systems are systems

where the vote share of each party is similar across geographic units (e.g. districts, provinces, and regions), while weakly nationalised party systems exhibit large variation in the vote shares of parties across sub-national units' (Kasuya and Moenius, 2008, p. 136).

Previous studies of party institutionalisation in Russia (Golosov 2015, Turovsky 2016) have shown that although cross-regional differences in voting for UR are salient, the party system became much more nationalised in the 2000s. This is primarily due to the fact that by the mid-2000s the Kremlin's party of power, United Russia (UR), had emerged as the dominant force in the country (see Gel'man 2006, Reuter 2010, Reuter and Remington 2009, Ross 2011). Under Putin, a "power vertical" was created which has enabled the Kremlin to bring the main elite groups under its control, and an electoral authoritarian regime (Golosov 2011, 2017, Kynev 2017, Ross 2011a, Schedler 2002) has been established which has guarantees the victory of UR in almost all elections.

At the same time, it has to be stressed that there are two dimensions of party nationalisation (see Morgenstern, Swindle, and Castagnola, 2009, Mustillo, and Mustillo, 2012); "static nationalisation," and "dynamic nationalisation." 'Static nationalisation measures the consistency of a party's support across a country at a particular point in time. It therefore measures the degree to which a party has broad appeal across the nation.' (Morgenstern et al, 2009). "Dynamic nationalisation", by contrast, 'is concerned with whether a party's vote in the various districts rises or falls in a consistent manner across elections' and here the stress 'is on the uniformity of "swings" or "trends" in the district vote' (Ibid.).

Whilst static nationalization of the voting for UR has been examined by scholars, the study of dynamic nationalization has not yet been addressed. In this study, we shall focus on both dimension and particularly on the "dynamic" aspect of party nationalisation. The paper addresses the following questions: To what extent is static nationalization accompanied by dynamic nationalization? Are there cross-regional variations in the dynamic nationalization of

UR's support, and if so what explains these differences? Which regions demonstrate stable levels of deviations at each election, and which regions demonstrate variations in their levels of deviation? Are there differences in the stability of regional deviations between Duma and Presidential elections?

In order to answer these questions we analyse the four Duma elections (2003, 2007, 2011 and 2016), and the three Presidential elections (2004, 2008, 2012) contested by UR, since the party was formed in 2001. The study begins with a brief review of cross-regional differences in voting for UR / UR candidates. We examine the scope of cross-regional differences and compare the dynamic of the deviations from the national results across the regions. Next, we juxtapose the degree and stability of regional deviations in UR's electoral support from the national results. This allows us to divide all the regions into discrete groups, which are analysed in detail in the final section.

Static Nationalisation: The Scope of Cross-Regional Differences in Voting for UR in Duma and Presidential Elections

Russia is one of the largest and most ethnically diverse multinational federations in the world. Moreover, the Federation is highly asymmetrical. The current 85 federal subjects vary widely in the size of their territories and populations, and their socio-economic status and ethnic composition (Ross, 2011). The regional dimension of voting for United Russia has been examined by many scholars (Clem 2006; Marsh, Albert and Warhola 2004; Reisinger and Moraski 2009; Reisinger and Moraski 2010, Panov and Ross 2013 White 2015; White 2016). There are also important regional variations in electoral and party politics and in the types of political regimes which operate in the regions, which range from "competitive" to "hegemonic" authoritarian (Panov and Ross 2013). As this study will demonstrate, the dominance of UR at the national level is accompanied by strong cross-regional variations. Thus, despite the fact that UR / UR's candidates consistently gain a majority in all the regions, the degree of its

dominance varies greatly. In other word, one can observe significant regional deviations from UR's nationwide results, in both positive and negative directions.

A review of the most recent literature on regional voting in Russia, demonstrates that regions with a larger share of non-Russians and a larger share of rural inhabitants exhibit higher levels of support for UR (Panov and Ross 2016; Frye, Reuter and Szakonyi 201; Golosov 2013; White 2016). Thus, for example, White in her study of the impact of ethnicity and voting for UR has demonstrated that districts with greater proportions of non-Russians were 'robust sources of support' for United Russia in the Duma elections of 2003–2011. The ethnic republics delivered 'between one-quarter and roughly one-third of United Russia's votes in each election: 26.8% in 2003, 25.4% in 2007, and 30.3% percent in 2011' (White 2015, 525-6). Likewise, Reisinger and Moraski found that the strongest explanatory factor for variations in the level of electoral support for UR (in Duma and Presidential elections held over the period 1995-2008) was, 'the proportion of the population that is non-Russian, and they concluded that, 'to a high degree the federal leadership's dominance rests on vote totals provided by the republics and autonomous regions' (2010, 68).

In order to examine static nationalisation, i.e. regional deviations from the national results for UR in separate elections in more detail, we use two sets of data: 1) The regional party list results for UR in four Duma elections (2003, 2007, 2011 and 2016) in 83 regions; 2) The regional results for UR candidates in three presidential elections (Putin's victory in 2004 and 2012; Medvedev's victory in 2008) in 83 regions. Crimea and Sevastopol', in addition to a small number of ethnic regions which were merged with other regions in the mid-2000s, are excluded from our analysis.

All the *absolute values of the deviations* of each region from the national results (*URdevDuma* and *URdevPres*) are presented in the Appendix. We also calculated the sum of the modulus of regional deviations in each election. Their values along with the national results

and the statistics of cross-regional deviations from the national results can be seen in Table 1, and Figure 1.

[Table 1 about here]

[Figure 1 about here]

In general, one can see (in Table 1) that the range of regional results for UR / UR's candidates was exceptionally high in all the elections, although it was higher in the Duma elections (from 50.6% to 70.4%) than in the Presidential elections (between 32.3% and 53%). In 2003, the worst result for UR was in Voronezh (25.9%) whilst Chechnya demonstrated the highest support for UR (79.8%). Chechnya remains the most successful region for UR in all the other Duma elections (99.36% in 2007; 99.48% in 2011; 96.30% in 2016) and also in the 2012 Presidential elections (99.76% for Putin). In 2004, the highest result for a UR candidate was in Ingushetiya (98.18%), and in 2012 – in Dagestan (91.92%). On the other hand, the regions where UR / UR' candidates received the lowest number of votes vary: Nenets AO in 2007 (48.78%); Yaroslavl in 2011 (29.04%); Altay krai in 2016 (35.20%); Belgorod in 2004 (54.82%); Smolensk in 2008 (59.26%); Moscow in 2012 (46.76%).

It is noticeable that the general scope of deviations is fairly stable within each type of election, and there is no clear upward / downward trend. The values of the standard deviations for the Duma elections fluctuate between 0.111 and 0.169, and for the Presidential elections – between 0.084 and 0.103. The sum of modulus of regional deviations in the Duma elections increased from 6.2877 in 2003 to 10.9942 in 2011 but then fell to 9.9352. The Presidential elections show much more stable values – 5.59; 5.36; 5.96.

At the same time, there are clear differences in the results for the Duma and Presidential elections. The latter demonstrates much lower cross-regional deviations than the former. This is not surprising as the results for UR's candidates in presidential elections are much higher than the results for the party in Duma elections. Here it is important to stress that voting patterns

are different in the two types of elections: Presidential elections are much more personalized, and Putin's personal popularity matters in Presidential elections to a greater extent than in Duma elections.

The Dynamic of Cross-Regional Deviations in Voting for UR in Duma and Presidential Elections

In order to compare the dynamic of the deviations from the national results between different regions, we constructed the indicator - *average degree of deviations* (*averURdevDuma* and *averURdevPres*). This is calculated for each of the regions on the basis of the absolute values of regional deviations. Its values, which are also displayed in the Appendix, are the sum of modulus of the absolute values of regional deviations divided by the number of consecutive elections (4 for the Duma and 3 for the Presidential elections). The statistics for these variables are displayed in Table 2.

[Table 2 about here]

It has been found that in general, the values of the average degree of deviations as well as cross-regional differences are, as expected, much greater for the Duma elections than in Presidential elections, and the scope of the cross-regional deviations is greater for Duma elections. The regions with the highest level of deviation in the Duma elections are Chechnya (*averURdevDuma* is 0.424); Mordoviya (0.3504); Kabardino-Balkariya (0.3252); Tuva (0.2958), and Ingushetiya (0.2843). The group with the highest levels of deviation in the Presidential elections includes almost the same regions: Ingushetiya (*averURdevPres* is 0.2554); Chechnya (0.2521); Dagestan (0.2474); Mordoviya (0.2118); Tuva (0.2057). It has to be stressed that all these regions have very high positive deviations from the national results. In other words, they deliver much higher levels of electoral support to UR than the Russian electorate as a whole.

On the other hand, we have a group of regions with the lowest average deviations. The least deviated regions for the Duma elections are; Belgorod (*averURdevDuma* is 0.0195); Stavropol (0.0199); Yakutiya (0.0239); Chuvashiya (0.0287); Rostov (0.0364). It is notable that all of these regions are outside the respective group for the Presidential elections, where the other group of the regions demonstrates the lowest average deviations: Pskov (*averURdevPres* is 0.0151); Perm (0.0168); Kamchatka (0.0171); Komi (0.0171); Adygeya (0.0204). At the same time, most of the least deviated regions in the Duma elections are not very far from the top of the least deviated regions in the Presidential elections: Rostov is 15; Chuvashiya – 18; Yakutiya – 20; Stavropol – 31 (with the exception of Belgorod which is only 63). Similarly, the least deviated regions in the Presidential elections have middle positions in the list of Duma elections: Kamchatka – 15; Pskov – 32; Komi – 39; Perm – 42; Adygeya – 50.

Overall, as can be seen in Figure 2, the values of the average degree of deviations for the Duma and Presidential elections to a great extent correlate with each other (the coefficient of correlation is 0.884 with 0.01 statistical significance).

[Figure 2 about here]

In order to examine, whether social-economic or the political features of the regions influence on the average degrees of deviations, we carried out regression analysis using as predictors some variables which relate to the main social, economic and political specificities of the regions:

- The level of poverty (average in 2003-2015, weighed to all-Russian values);
- Share of urban population (average in 2003-2015, weighed to all-Russian values);
- Share of ethnic Russians in the population of the region (census of 2010);
- The degree of authoritarianism in the regions, for the measurement of which the share of vote for UR (average in 2003-2015, weighed to all-Russian values) was used.

The results, which are presented in Table 3, demonstrate that the only statistically significant predictor is regime-type (which refers to the level of authoritarianism, see discussion below)

[Table 3 about here]

The results of our regression analysis is also confirmed by the picture on Figure 2: this shows that, although the overwhelming majority of the regions demonstrate fairly low values of deviation for both the Duma and Presidential elections, there is also a group of regions with an exceptionally high degree of deviation from the national results. Such a group is clearly represented if we take the value of 0.15 as a conditional threshold between a fairly high and fairly low degree of deviation and divide the plane into sections by both horizontal and vertical lines according to this value. 7 regions are above the horizontal line and to the right of the vertical line: number 11 – Chechnya; 15 – Dagestan; 16 - Ingushetiya; 42 – Mordoviya; 20 - Kabardino-Balkariya; 25 - Karachaevo-Cherkessiya; 71 – Tuva. Additionally, four other regions are close to this group: 81 - Yamalo-Nenets AO; 7 – Bashkortostan; 68 – Tatarstan; 13 - Chukotka). Again, we can see that all of the regions with the highest levels of deviation have positive deviations: these are the well-known ‘national republics’ with strong authoritarian political regimes. In other words, in most cases it is strong regional authoritarianism that generates the highest levels of regional deviations in voting for UR / UR’s candidates.

Dynamic Nationalisation: Stability/Instability of Regional Deviations in Voting for UR in Duma and Presidential Elections

It has to be stressed that the indicator *averURdev* shows the extent to which a region generally deviates from the national value, however it tells us nothing about the stability/instability of these deviations, as in order to calculate this indicator we take a modulus of deviations. Thus, for example, the same high value of *averURdev* may appear both in the case of high and very stable deviations in one direction and in the case of very unstable deviations, when a region

deviates from the national results in different directions across several elections. Similarly, the value of *averURdev* may be fairly low even if the results of UR in a region change their direction relative to the national values. For instance, in the Duma elections, a region may have deviations such as: 2003 = -0.05; 2007 = 0.05; 2011 = -0.05; 2016 = 0.05. Here the value of the *averURdev* would be fairly low = 0.05 in spite of the fact that the values of deviation have changed significantly from one election to the next.

Taking the above factors into account, for the analysis of stability/instability of deviations, we calculated another indicator, *the average instability of deviations* (*instabURdevDuma* and *instabURdevPres*). In contrast to *averURdev*, it is based on absolute values, not the modulus of the deviations of a region from the national results in all the elections (*URdevDuma* and *URdevPres*). Here we, 1) calculate the values of change in regional deviations from the nationwide results between consecutive elections; 2) we take the modulus of change; 3) we calculate the average values of the modulus: the sum of the modulus divided by the number of changes (3 on Duma and 2 on Presidential elections).

The values of the average instability of deviations are displayed in the Appendix; and the statistics of these variables are presented in Table 2. Again, one can see that the values of the average instability of deviations, as well as cross-regional differences are greater in the Duma than in Presidential elections, but to a much lesser extent than the values of the average degree of deviations. The most stable deviations in Duma elections are observed in Penza (*instabURdevDuma* is 0.0187); Stavropol (0.0189); Vladimir (0.0196); Kaluga (0.0226), Belgorod (0.0257). These are the regions which follow the national pattern of fluctuations in voting for UR to a greater extent. On the contrary, Ingushetiya (0.1523), Karachaevo-Cherkessiya (0.1386); Astrakhan (0.1349); Komi (0.1337), and Bashkortostan (0.1296) demonstrate the most unstable deviations from the national results.

It is interesting that in the Presidential elections Komi appears in the opposite group of regions with the most stable deviations (*instabURdevPres* is 0.0044), coming after the Altay Republic (0.0020) and alongside Irkutsk (0.0063); Novosibirsk (0.0067), and the Jewish AO (0.0075). Belgorod, on the contrary, shows the most unstable deviations in the Presidential elections, appearing just after the 5 top unstable regions – Kirov (0.1172); Moscow (0.1097); Marii El (0.1073); Chechnya (0.1019); North Ossetiya (0.1012).

[Figure 3 about here]

In general, as can be seen in Figure 3, most regions demonstrate fairly high levels of stability of deviations. Both vertical and horizontal lines divide the plane into sections according to the value 0.08. The value was chosen rather arbitrary, however it is likely to be not very high, and consequently may logically be considered as a conditional threshold. Hence, the overwhelming majority of the regions (60 out of 83), which are located on the lower left section, have values of average instability lower than 0.08 for both types of election. Only three regions (11 – Chechnya; 25 - Karachaevo-Cherkessiya; 43 – Moscow) have values of average instability higher than 0.08 for both types of election.

Interconnection between the Degree and Stability of Regional Deviations of UR's Support

We can divide the regions into various groups based on the degree of their deviations (both stable and unstable) from the national results. If we take the same threshold as previously, it is possible to distinguish regions with 'normal' or 'moderate' deviations (less than 0.15) and 'anomalous' or 'abnormal' deviation (more than 0.15). Also we have to take into account the fact that deviations may have a different sign, i.e., be either in favour of UR or against UR. Additionally, 'fluctuating deviations' when there are neither clear pro nor contra UR trends, have to be distinguished. Groups of regions based on these criteria are displayed in Table 4.

[Table 4 about here]

In Figures 4-5, we place all the regions on the plane where the values of instability of deviations are marked on the X axis, and the values of the degree of deviations are on the Y axis. Both the horizontal and vertical lines are the thresholds of degree (0.15) and stability (0.08) of deviations. Analysing the results, we can distinguish three clusters.

[Figure 4-5 about here]

1. The first cluster (11 cases) includes the regions with abnormal deviations (they are all located above the horizontal line). Two regions - Chechnya (number 11 in the Appendix) and Karachaevo-Cherkessiya (25) - demonstrate *unstable abnormal deviations in favour of UR* in all the elections. Two other regions show *stable abnormal pro-UR deviations* in all the elections: Kabardino-Balkariya (20) and Tuva (71). Dagestan (15), Ingushetiya (16), and Mordoviya (42) are between these groups, demonstrating unstable abnormal deviations in the Duma elections, and stable abnormal deviations in the Presidential elections. Additionally, one can see stable abnormal pro-UR deviations in the Duma elections in Kemerovo (27) and Tatarstan (68); and in Presidential elections in Bashkortostan (7) and Yamalo-Nenets AO (81).

It is noticeable, that there are neither regions with abnormal deviations against UR nor even fluctuating regions in this cluster. All the regions above the horizontal line on both planes are strong pro-UR regions. It has to be stressed that it is their abnormality that generates the instability in their deviations from the national results, since they usually provide abnormal voting for UR, irrespective of how the country votes as a whole. Thus, for example, the results of UR / UR's candidates in Chechnya was 99.36% (2007), 99.48% (2011), 96.30% (2016), 92.3% (2004), 88.7% (2008), 99.76% (2012), in spite of the fact that there were significant variations in the national results over this time period.

The existence of this group of regions explains the fairly high degree of correlation between the average instability of deviations and the average degree of deviations. The correlation coefficients take statistically significant values which achieve 0.457 in the Duma

elections and 0.241 in the Presidential elections. Strictly speaking, theoretically and logically, these two variables should not connect with each other as they reflect different phenomenon. Nevertheless, in the context of Russian regional politics such a connection appears. The anomalous voting for UR in the most authoritarian regions is grounded in the strong administrative pressure which is placed on voters and electoral commissions. To the extent which authoritarian rulers exercise strict control over their regional elites, voters, and the electoral process in general, the results for UR and its candidates will not depend on voters' preferences. As a consequence, high instability of deviations in UR's support from the national results takes place in these regions. Softer regional regimes are characterized by greater degrees of intra-elite competitiveness that leads to weaker administrative pressure. In this context, the results of UR and its candidates will depend on voters' preferences to a much greater extent. Here, national election trends matter and thus the level of instability of deviations decreases.

2. Moving to the right sector below the horizontal line, we can distinguish some groups of regions with normal unstable deviations in voting for UR – 12 in the Duma elections (excluding number 7 – Bashkortostan which was included in the first cluster) and 8 - in the Presidential elections (including Tambov (67) that is very closed to the line). Only two regions (Moscow and Tambov) are common for both Duma and Presidential elections, however we suggest that high instability of deviations of at least one type of election is sufficient for inclusion of the region in this cluster.

Most of these regions (11 of 18), as we would expect, are characterized by fluctuated voting. In other words, they deviate from the national results in favour of UR at some elections, whilst at others they deviate in the opposite direction. At the same time, there is a group of 5 regions which demonstrate completely or almost completely *contra-UR unstable deviations*: Amur (4), Archangelsk (5), Kirov (31), Lipetsk (39), and Moscow (43). Moscow here is the most exemplary case of a region with highly unstable deviations. Here support for UR deviates

from the national results against the party of power (except for the 2008 Presidential elections) but the degree of anti-UR voting changes very significantly. As it is well known, for a long time Moscow politics was dominated by the ‘political machine’ created by Mayor Luzhkov (Brie 2004). In spite of fairly widespread anti-government sentiments of Moscow residents, this political machine ensured pro-Kremlin voting in 2003 (the absolute value of deviation was closer to the national results: -0.0347); 2004 (-0.0270); 2011 (-0.0267). Nevertheless, in the face of a changed political context (the resignation of Luzhkov was a part of this change), the results for UR decreased sharply, and the absolute value of deviation was -0.1677 in 2012, and -0.1640 in 2016.

On the other side, two regions – Chukotka (13) and North Ossetiya (48) – show *pro-UR deviations* in all the elections but their degree is very unstable. Thus, in Chukotka voting for UR in 2003 was much more than the national results (the value of deviation was 0.1683). In 2007, the deviation fell slightly (0.1383), in 2011 it increased again, significantly (0.2103) but in 2016 it decreased sharply (only 0.0460). North Ossetiya demonstrates similar results.

3. The overwhelming majority of regions (54 of 83) appear in the last cluster of cases - normal and stable deviations in voting for UR (the left sector below the horizontal line). This result is in line with our observation, pointed out above, that most of the regions demonstrate moderate and fairly stable and consistent deviations from UR’s nationwide results. Nevertheless, such stability may have different meanings in different regions. The group of 6 regions, which normally deviate in favour of UR in all or almost all the elections, can be clearly distinguished. Among them, Kalmykiya (22) provides UR with the most support (average deviation is 0.1369 in the Duma elections and 0.0532 in the Presidential elections). Adygeya (1), Tyumen (73), Saratov (62), and Penza are also very favourable UR regions. Rostov deviates from the nationwide results to a much lesser extent (0.0364 and 0.0292) but always in favour of UR.

17 regions show a clear trend which is neither pro nor contra UR. Stavropol (65) is a very interesting case, as it is the region that is closest to the national results of UR. Fluctuations in voting for UR in Stavropol relative to the national results are very low. Krasnodar (34), Buryatiya (10), Udmurtiya (74), Yakutiya (80) have similar results. St. Petersburg (64) is another interesting region that demonstrates clear and stable anti-UR voting in Duma elections (-0.0577; -0.1397; -0.1394; -0.1450) but loyal voting for UR in Presidential elections (0.0381; 0.0199; -0.0497). Sverdlovsk Oblast (66), Kareliya (26) are also in accord with such kinds of fluctuations. One important causal factor here is the poly-centric structure of the regional elites. This is clearly evident in the Duma elections, where bargaining between elite groups is a commonplace in these regions. However, Presidential elections are perceived by regional elites as an indicator of personal loyalty to the Kremlin. As a result the contradictions between elite groups fade into the background during Presidential elections.

Finally, the most populated group of regions (31) shows stable deviations against UR in all or almost all the elections, although the degree of opposition voting varies between them. The most anti-UR regions are Primorsky krai (56), Yaroslavl (82), Altay krai (2). Here we can also find many regions of Siberia and Urals: Novosibirsk (50), Irkutsk (17), Krasnoyarsk (35), Khakasiya (29), Omsk (51), Orenburg (52), Khabarovsk (28), and Tomsk (69). On the other hand, such regions as Chuvashiya (14), Kursk (37), Ulyanovsk (75), Kurgan (36), and Kaluga (23) deviate from the nationwide results in all the elections against UR, but the degree of their deviation is not very high, thus they can be considered as regions which reflect the national trends rather than opposing UR.

Conclusion

The main finding of this study is that static nationalization of UR's support, which takes place in the context of Putin's power vertical, is also accompanied by dynamic nationalization. As our research has shown, an overwhelming majority of the Russian regions demonstrate fairly

high stability of their deviations from nationwide results in both the Duma and Presidential elections. Here change in the political context leads to change in UR's national results and leads to change in its regional results. Among those regions which generally follow national trends in voting for UR, three groups can be distinguished. The first are the regions which consistently vote in favour of UR / UR's candidates to a greater (Kalmykiya, Adygeya, Tyumen) or lesser (Rostov) extent. Three dozen regions (e.g., Primorsky krai, Yaroslavl, Altay krai, and so forth) consistently provide UR with poorer results than the average for the country, although the degree of their deviations against UR differs. Finally, there are some regions (Stavropol, Udmurtiya, Yakutiya) which consistently vote very close to the national results, reflecting the national trends in voting for UR to the greatest degree. These results throw new light on the levels of stability and instability of regional voting patterns in Russian federal elections, and the consolidation of UR's regional support base.

At the same time, there still remain important regional variations in both static and dynamic nationalization of voting for UR. The analysis shows that these variations are mostly explained by the type of authoritarian rule which exists in a particular region. While in some 'competitive authoritarian' regions, genuine competition between political actors is allowed to take place, as long as the election results deliver overall victory to the ruling party, in other 'hegemonic authoritarian regions', genuine electoral competition is eliminated completely and election results are manipulated in favour of UR. Our study uncovered a group of 11 'hegemonic authoritarian' regimes (Chechnya, Karachaevo-Cherkessiya, Kabardino-Balkariya, Tuva, Dagestan, Ingushetiya, Mordoviya, Kemerovo, Tatarstan, Bashkortostan, Yamalo-Nenets AO) where there is no genuine political competition. In these regions we find abnormally high levels of support for UR. By exercising strong administrative pressure on voters and electoral commissions, the rulers of these regions are able to guarantee the Kremlin almost any election result it desires. As a consequence, change in the political context plays

almost no part in determining the election results for the regions in the hegemonic authoritarian group. They do not follow the national trend of support for UR, which explains why these regions have the highest levels of deviation, as well as the highest levels of instability of these deviations.

The study also found that whilst the general scope of cross-regional deviations is fairly stable for each type of election, at the same time, there are important differences between Duma and Presidential elections. Presidential elections are much more personalized, and Putin's personal popularity matters to a greater extent than in Duma elections. As a result, UR's candidates are much more successful than their party in Duma elections. Thus, Presidential elections are characterized by a lower range of regional variations in their results for UR, a lower average degree of deviations, and higher stability of deviations of individual regions, from the nationwide results.

Finally, our results challenges some of the prevailing views about the nature of central-local relations in Russia and Putin's power vertical – the idea that the President is omnipotent and the Kremlin can guarantee any election result it requires from any region. Dynamic nationalisation primarily means that there is a consistent pattern of support across election cycles, but it does not signify what the level of support will be. Our study shows that whilst a majority of regions give strong levels of support to Putin and UR there are also group of regions which consistently give lower than average votes to the Kremlin. Thus, geography and the specific nature of regional politics matters. The centre cannot simply dictate to the regions how they should vote. Moreover, to achieve victory in the Duma and Presidential elections, the Kremlin has to rely on the 'inflated' and largely 'manufactured' electoral support it receives from the ethnic republics.

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Table 1. Nationwide results of UR and statistics of regional deviations

	UR 2003	UR 2007	UR 2011	UR 2016	Putin 2004	Medvedev 2008	Putin 2012
National results	0.3757	0.6430	0.4929	0.5420	0.7131	0.7028	0.6353
Sum of the modulus of deviations	6.2877	6.5204	10.9942	9.9352	5.5853	5.3564	5.9551
Regional results: statistics							
Minimum	0.259	0.488	0.290	0.352	0.548	0.593	0.468
Maximum	0.798	0.994	0.995	0.963	0.982	0.919	0.998
Range	0.539	0.506	0.704	0.611	0.434	0.323	0.530
Mean	0.387	0.651	0.492	0.514	0.717	0.699	0.644
Standard error	0.012	0.012	0.019	0.016	0.010	0.009	0.0113
Standard deviation	0.113	0.111	0.169	0.142	0.091	0.084	0.103
Variance	0.013	0.012	0.029	0.020	0.008	0.007	0.011

Figure 1. Cross-regional deviations from the national results (numbers of the regions are the same as in the Appendix)

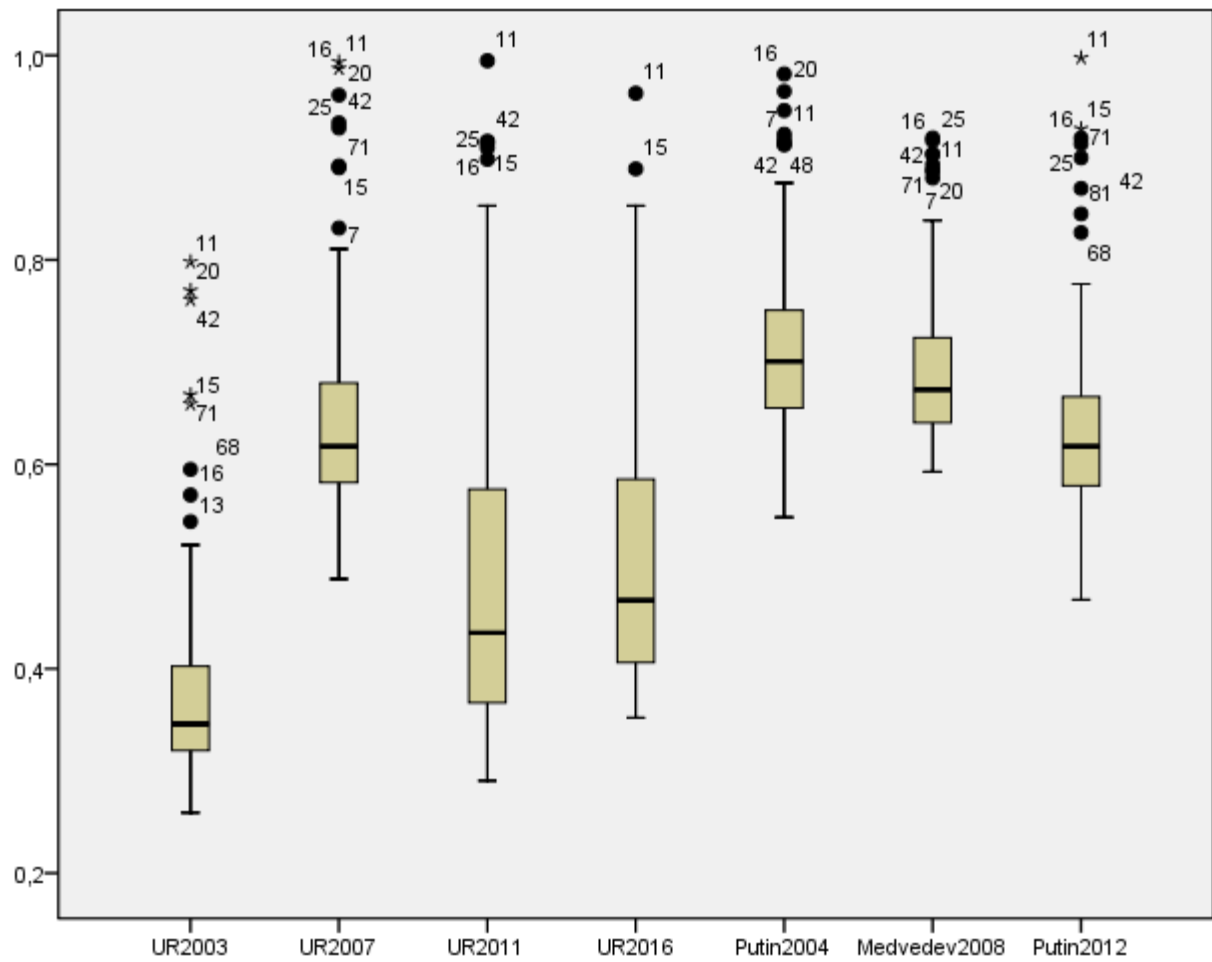


Table 2. Statistics of the values of the average degree of deviations and the average instability of deviations

	averURdev Duma	averURdev Pres	instabURdev Duma	instabURdev Pres
Range	0.4042	0.2403	0.1336	0.1152
Maximum	0.4240	0.2554	0.1523	0.1172
Minimum	0.0198	0.0151	0.0187	0.0020
Mean	0.1016	0.0679	0.0607	0.0438
Standard error	0.0085	0.0061	0.0033	0.0028
Standard deviation	0.0777	0.0557	0.0304	0.0256
Variance	0.006	0.003	0.001	0.001

Table 3. Regressions results of aver_modul_URdev_Duma and aver_modul_URdev_Pres

	Duma		Presidential	
	B (St.Er.)	Beta	B (St.Er.)	Beta
(Constant)	-0.296*** (0.091)		-0.094 (0.067)	
poverty_weighed_aver	0.012 (0,015)	0.063	0.000 (0.011)	-0.006
share_urban_weighed_aver	0.041 (0.040)	0.096	0.004 (0.029)	0.012
share_Rus_2010	-0.009 (0.036)	-0.030	-0.045* (0.027)	-0.209
aver_vote_UR	0.599*** (0.083)	0.820	0.330*** (0.061)	0.630
R-square	0.662		0.639	
Significance	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01			

Variables and Sources for Table 3

Variables	Name	Sources
Level of poverty	poverty_weighed_aver	Calculated by the authors on the basis of: <i>Regiony Rossii: Sotsial'no-ekonomicheskije Pokazateli 2010</i> (Moskva: Rosstat, 2010). Table 5.11; <i>Regiony Rossii: Sotsial'no-ekonomicheskije Pokazateli 2016</i> (Moskva: Rosstat, 2016). Table 4.16
Share of urban population	share_urban_weighed_aver	Calculated by the authors on the basis of: <i>Regiony Rossii: Sotsial'no-ekonomicheskije Pokazateli 2010</i> (Moskva: Rosstat, 2010). Table 3.3; <i>Regiony Rossii: Sotsial'no-ekonomicheskije Pokazateli 2016</i> (Moskva: Rosstat, 2016). Table 2.3
Share of ethnic Russians	share_Rus_2010	<i>Vserossiiskaya Perepis' Naseleniya 2010</i> . Table 'National composition of the RF population', available at: http://www.gks.ru/free_doc/new_site/perepis2010/perepis_i_togi1612.htm , accessed 8 March 2017.
The degree of authoritarianism	aver_vote_UR	Calculated by the authors from the information provided on the Russian Central Electoral Commission Website (http://www.cikf.ru).

Figure 2. Cross-Regional Differences in Average Degree of Deviations in Voting for UR on Duma and Presidential Elections (numbers of the regions are the same as in Appendix)

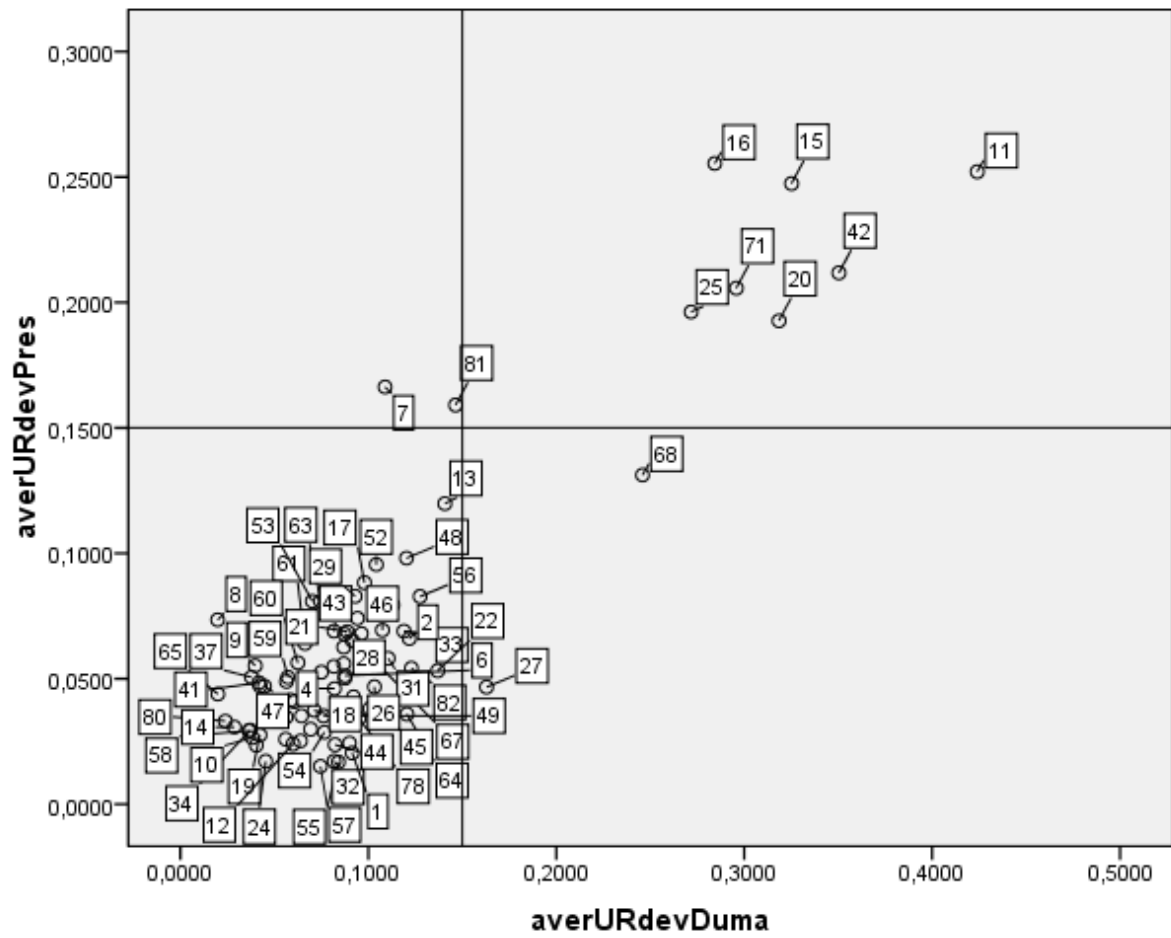


Figure 3. Cross-Regional Differences in Average Instability of Deviations in Voting for UR in Duma and Presidential Elections (numbers of the regions are the same as in Appendix)

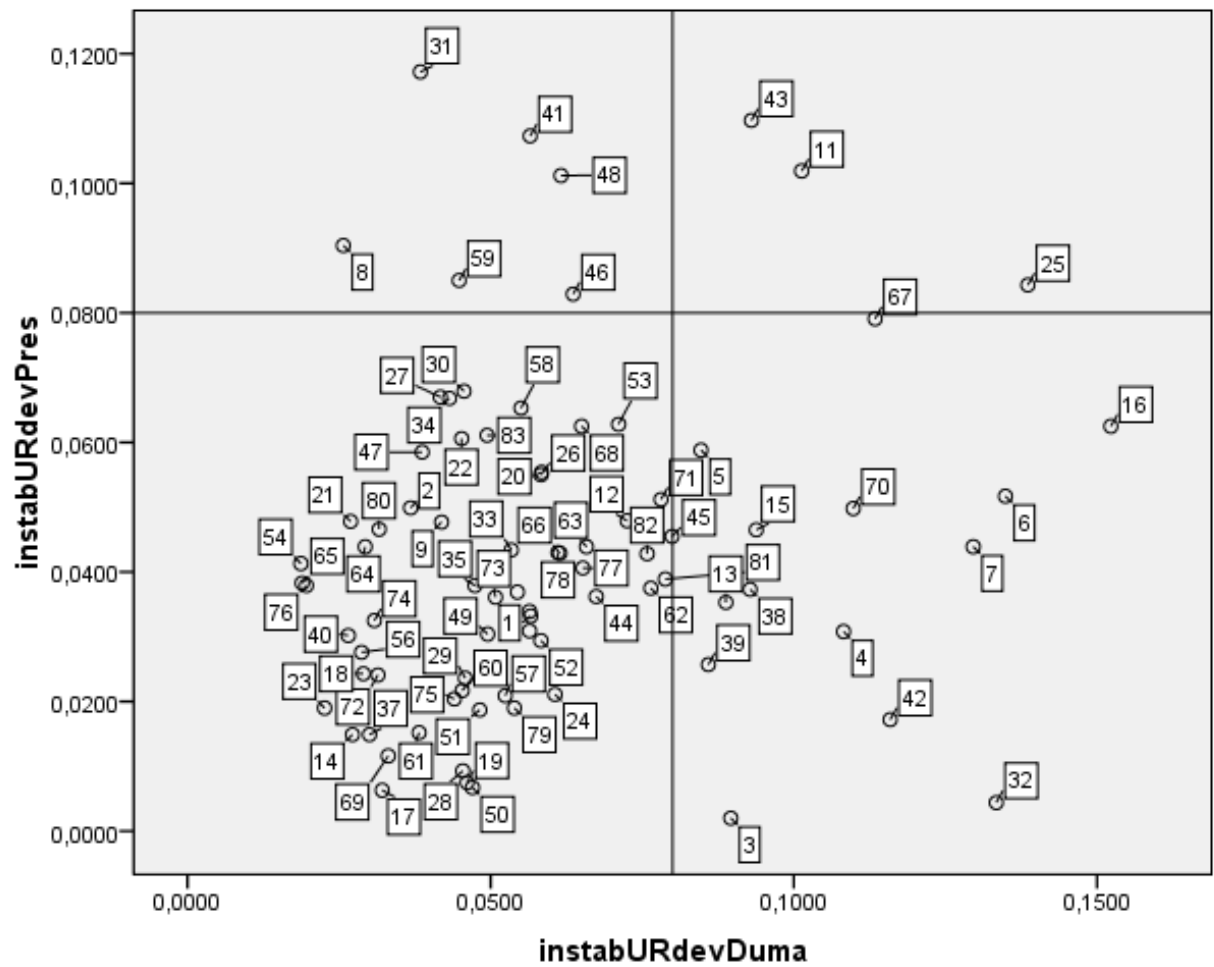
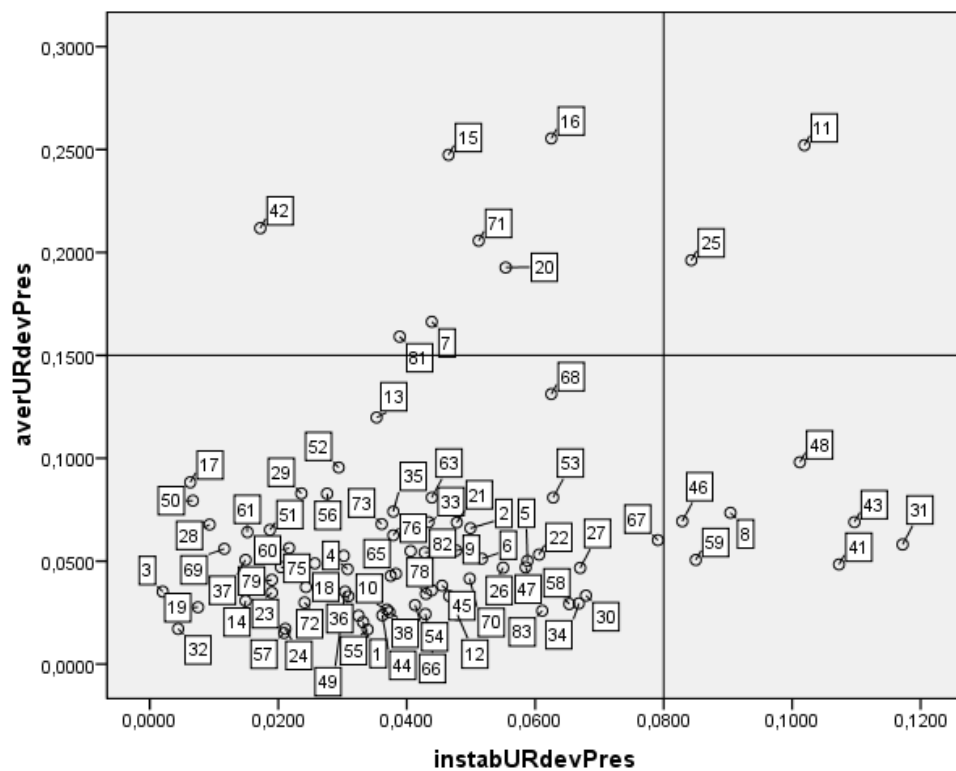
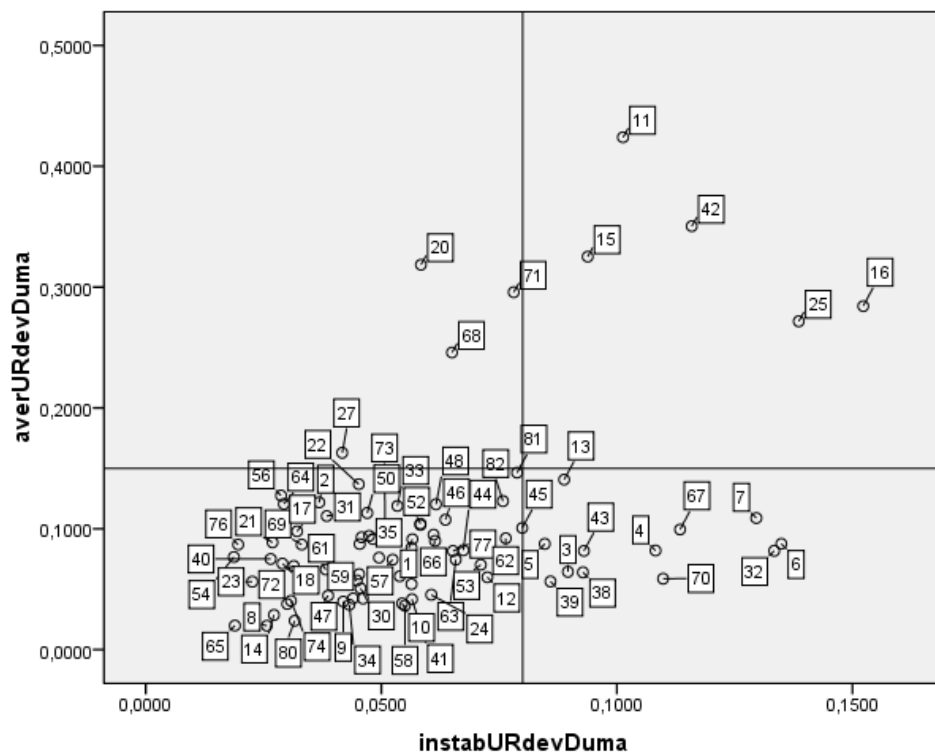


Table 4. Groups of Regions Based on Their Voting for UR in Federal Elections

			Stability of deviations	
			Unstable	Stable
Degree of deviations	Abnormal	Pro-UR	9 regions (<i>Chechnya; Karachaevo-Cherkessiya, etc.</i>)	2 regions (<i>Kabardino-Balkariya; Tuva</i>)
		Anti-UR	No	No
		Fluctuated	No	No
	Moderate	Pro-UR	2 regions (<i>Chukotka; North Ossetiya</i>)	6 regions (<i>Kalmykiya; Adygeya, etc.</i>)
		Anti-UR	5 regions (<i>Moscow, Archangelsk, etc.</i>)	31 regions (<i>Primorsky krai; Yaroslavl, etc.</i>)
		Fluctuating	11 regions	17 regions (<i>Stavropol, Udmurtiya, etc.</i>)

Figure 4-5. Cross-Regional Juxtapositions between Degree and Stability of Deviations in Voting for UR on Duma and Presidential Elections (numbers of the regions are the same as in Appendix)



Appendix. Regional deviations from the national results of UR / UR's candidates in Federal elections

	averURd ev Duma	instabU R devDum a	URdev 2003	URdev 2007	URdev 2011	URdev 2016	averURd ev Pres	instabU R devPres	Putin dev2004	Medvedev dev2008	Putin dev2012
1 Adygeya	0.0914	0.0566	0.1373	0.0667	0.1092	0.0525	0.0204	0.0332	0.0511	-0.0051	0.0051
2 Altay krai	0.1218	0.0368	-0.0797	-0.0961	-0.1212	-0.1900	0.0660	0.0499	-0.0367	-0.0993	-0.0620
3 Altay rep.	0.0644	0.0896	-0.1117	0.0516	0.0404	-0.0539	0.0352	0.0020	0.0372	0.0354	0.0332
4 Amur	0.0820	0.1082	-0.0527	0.0545	-0.0576	-0.1630	0.0461	0.0308	-0.0644	-0.0666	-0.0073
5 Archangelsk	0.0875	0.0847	0.0033	-0.0758	-0.1739	-0.0970	0.0502	0.0588	0.0614	-0.0330	-0.0561
6 Astrakhan	0.0876	0.1349	-0.0587	-0.0629	0.1088	-0.1200	0.0512	0.0517	-0.0523	0.0500	0.0512
7 Bashkortostan	0.1089	0.1296	0.0133	0.1882	0.2121	0.0220	0.1663	0.0439	0.2047	0.1773	0.1169
8 Belgorod	0.0198	0.0257	-0.0447	0.0109	0.0187	0.0050	0.0735	0.0904	-0.1649	-0.0132	-0.0423
9 Bryansk	0.0398	0.0419	-0.0287	-0.0253	0.0083	0.0970	0.0552	0.0477	-0.0774	-0.0846	0.0036
10 Buryatiya	0.0382	0.0544	-0.0287	0.0129	-0.0027	-0.1086	0.0265	0.0369	-0.0473	0.0056	0.0265
11 Chechnya	0.4240	0.1013	0.4223	0.3506	0.5019	0.4210	0.2521	0.1019	0.2099	0.1842	0.3623
12 Chelyabinsk	0.0599	0.0725	-0.0377	-0.0319	0.0099	-0.1600	0.0240	0.0479	-0.0113	-0.0465	0.0141
13 Chukotka	0.1407	0.0888	0.1683	0.1383	0.2103	0.0460	0.1198	0.0353	0.1593	0.1113	0.0887
14 Chuvashiya	0.0287	0.0272	-0.0027	-0.0203	-0.0587	-0.0330	0.0307	0.0149	-0.0419	-0.0380	-0.0122
15 Dagestan	0.3252	0.0938	0.2833	0.2489	0.4215	0.3470	0.2474	0.0465	0.2330	0.2164	0.2929
16 Ingushetiya	0.2843	0.1523	0.1943	0.3442	0.4167	0.1821	0.2554	0.0625	0.2687	0.2138	0.2838
17 Irkutsk	0.0979	0.0321	-0.0477	-0.0561	-0.1436	-0.1440	0.0883	0.0063	-0.0935	-0.0904	-0.0810
18 Ivanovo	0.0712	0.0290	-0.0397	-0.0354	-0.0917	-0.1180	0.0374	0.0243	-0.0410	-0.0536	-0.0176
19 Jewish AO	0.0423	0.0461	0.0463	0.0192	-0.0118	-0.0920	0.0276	0.0075	-0.0344	-0.0289	-0.0194
20 Kabardino-Balkariya	0.3185	0.0584	0.3943	0.3182	0.3262	0.2351	0.1927	0.0554	0.2518	0.1852	0.1410
21 Kaliningrad	0.0888	0.0269	-0.0557	-0.0692	-0.1222	-0.1080	0.0688	0.0478	-0.0145	-0.0819	-0.1100
22 Kalmykiya	0.1369	0.0452	0.1313	0.0840	0.1681	0.1640	0.0532	0.0606	0.0792	0.0128	0.0675
23 Kaluga	0.0562	0.0226	-0.0247	-0.0265	-0.0887	-0.0850	0.0347	0.0190	-0.0115	-0.0474	-0.0454

24 Kamchatka	0.0454	0.0606	-0.0257	0.0405	-0.0404	-0.0750	0.0171	0.0211	0.0051	-0.0089	-0.0371
25 Karachaevo-Cherkessiya	0.2717	0.1386	0.1203	0.2860	0.4055	0.2750	0.1962	0.0843	0.1097	0.2007	0.2783
26 Kareliya	0.1032	0.0583	0.0033	-0.0702	-0.1703	-0.1690	0.0468	0.0550	0.0283	-0.0303	-0.0817
27 Kemerovo	0.1629	0.0417	0.1453	0.1256	0.1495	0.2310	0.0467	0.0670	0.0020	0.0023	0.1359
28 Khabarovsk	0.0874	0.0454	-0.0327	-0.0363	-0.1115	-0.1690	0.0678	0.0093	-0.0679	-0.0616	-0.0740
29 Khakasiya	0.0930	0.0458	-0.0717	-0.0477	-0.0916	-0.1610	0.0829	0.0236	-0.0990	-0.0981	-0.0517
30 Khanty-Mansi AO	0.0507	0.0456	0.0373	0.0165	-0.0828	-0.0660	0.0333	0.0679	0.0353	-0.0360	0.0286
31 Kirov	0.1105	0.0384	-0.0467	-0.0892	-0.1439	-0.1620	0.0581	0.1172	-0.0579	0.0601	-0.0563
32 Komi	0.0818	0.1334	-0.0457	-0.0224	0.0952	-0.1640	0.0171	0.0044	0.0228	0.0146	0.0140
33 Kostroma	0.1189	0.0534	-0.0347	-0.0795	-0.1855	-0.1760	0.0690	0.0434	-0.0209	-0.0784	-0.1077
34 Krasnodar	0.0371	0.0432	-0.0047	-0.0241	0.0686	0.0510	0.0295	0.0668	-0.0394	0.0478	0.0013
35 Krasnoyarsk	0.0942	0.0474	-0.0767	-0.0363	-0.1259	-0.1380	0.0741	0.0379	-0.1100	-0.0781	-0.0343
36 Kurgan	0.0542	0.0564	-0.0397	0.0013	-0.0488	-0.1270	0.0329	0.0309	-0.0437	-0.0535	-0.0016
37 Kursk	0.0378	0.0300	-0.0747	-0.0156	-0.0357	-0.0250	0.0506	0.0149	-0.0607	-0.0601	-0.0310
38 Leningrad Oblast	0.0639	0.0928	0.0053	-0.0507	-0.1575	-0.0420	0.0252	0.0373	0.0579	-0.0009	-0.0168
39 Lipetsk	0.0564	0.0859	-0.0937	-0.0200	-0.0920	0.0200	0.0489	0.0257	-0.0769	-0.0444	-0.0254
40 Magadan	0.0750	0.0265	-0.0317	-0.0906	-0.0825	-0.0950	0.0526	0.0302	-0.0126	-0.0721	-0.0731
41 Marii El	0.0417	0.0565	-0.0297	0.0324	0.0295	-0.0750	0.0484	0.1073	-0.0401	0.0694	-0.0357
42 Mordoviya	0.3504	0.1159	0.3853	0.2911	0.4233	0.3020	0.2118	0.0172	0.2004	0.2003	0.2346
43 Moscow	0.0817	0.0930	-0.0347	-0.1015	-0.0267	-0.1640	0.0690	0.1097	-0.0270	0.0124	-0.1677
44 Moscow Oblast	0.0823	0.0674	-0.0397	-0.0454	-0.1619	-0.0820	0.0237	0.0362	-0.0019	0.0013	-0.0680
45 Murmansk	0.1007	0.0799	0.0163	-0.0919	-0.1727	-0.1220	0.0381	0.0455	0.0273	-0.0502	-0.0368
46 Nenets AO	0.1075	0.0636	0.0113	-0.1552	-0.1325	-0.1310	0.0694	0.0829	0.0559	-0.0874	-0.0649
47 Nizhegorod Oblast	0.0447	0.0387	-0.0557	-0.0367	-0.0474	0.0390	0.0470	0.0585	-0.0543	-0.0844	0.0024
48 North Ossetiya	0.1203	0.0616	0.0913	0.0748	0.1861	0.1290	0.0981	0.1012	0.1994	0.0307	0.0644
49 Novgorod	0.0761	0.0495	-0.0047	-0.0117	-0.1471	-0.1410	0.0352	0.0304	0.0043	-0.0447	-0.0565

50 Novosibirsk	0.1131	0.0470	-0.0867	-0.0523	-0.1545	-0.1590	0.0794	0.0067	-0.0821	-0.0838	-0.0722
51 Omsk	0.0915	0.0482	-0.0487	-0.0416	-0.0968	-0.1790	0.0652	0.0187	-0.0428	-0.0724	-0.0803
52 Orenburg	0.1042	0.0583	-0.0997	-0.0399	-0.1440	-0.1330	0.0955	0.0294	-0.1252	-0.0947	-0.0665
53 Oryol	0.0702	0.0711	0.0703	-0.0445	-0.1030	-0.0630	0.0809	0.0628	-0.0965	-0.0390	-0.1071
54 Penza	0.0766	0.0187	0.0753	0.0601	0.0701	0.1010	0.0287	0.0413	-0.0675	0.0112	0.0073
55 Perm	0.0841	0.0564	-0.0687	-0.0224	-0.1301	-0.1150	0.0168	0.0339	0.0144	-0.0298	-0.0061
56 Primorsky krai	0.1275	0.0287	-0.1007	-0.0943	-0.1630	-0.1520	0.0828	0.0276	-0.1194	-0.0644	-0.0646
57 Pskov	0.0745	0.0524	-0.0047	-0.0757	-0.1264	-0.0910	0.0151	0.0209	-0.0052	-0.0012	-0.0390
58 Rostov	0.0364	0.0550	0.0143	0.0760	0.0093	0.0460	0.0292	0.0653	0.0118	0.0666	-0.0092
59 Ryazan	0.0572	0.0448	-0.0587	-0.0720	-0.0950	0.0030	0.0506	0.0850	0.0191	-0.0946	-0.0383
60 Sakhalin	0.0625	0.0453	-0.0747	-0.0134	-0.0738	-0.0880	0.0564	0.0217	-0.0290	-0.0676	-0.0725
61 Samara	0.0663	0.0382	-0.0497	-0.0822	-0.0992	-0.0340	0.0641	0.0152	-0.0803	-0.0620	-0.0500
62 Saratov	0.0921	0.0764	0.0673	0.0051	0.1560	0.1400	0.0428	0.0375	-0.0052	0.0534	0.0697
63 Smolensk	0.0745	0.0658	-0.0027	-0.1038	-0.1306	-0.0610	0.0809	0.0439	-0.0640	-0.1102	-0.0685
64 St Petersburg	0.1205	0.0293	-0.0577	-0.1397	-0.1394	-0.1450	0.0359	0.0439	0.0381	0.0199	-0.0497
65 Stavropol	0.0199	0.0189	-0.0557	-0.0210	-0.0018	0.0010	0.0439	0.0383	-0.0677	-0.0549	0.0090
66 Sverdlovsk Oblast	0.0900	0.0614	-0.0347	-0.0226	-0.1658	-0.1370	0.0243	0.0429	0.0503	-0.0130	0.0095
67 Tambov	0.0994	0.1134	-0.0857	-0.0451	0.1737	0.0930	0.0602	0.0791	-0.0769	0.0223	0.0812
68 Tatarstan	0.2459	0.0650	0.2193	0.1677	0.2854	0.3110	0.1312	0.0625	0.1127	0.0896	0.1914
69 Tomsk	0.0869	0.0331	-0.0357	-0.0589	-0.1178	-0.1350	0.0560	0.0116	-0.0416	-0.0616	-0.0648
70 Tula	0.0587	0.1098	-0.0767	-0.0258	0.1203	-0.0120	0.0415	0.0498	-0.0581	-0.0248	0.0415
71 Tuva	0.2958	0.0781	0.2923	0.2470	0.3600	0.2840	0.2057	0.0512	0.1622	0.1904	0.2646
72 Tver	0.0693	0.0314	-0.0307	-0.0459	-0.1085	-0.0920	0.0299	0.0241	-0.0072	-0.0271	-0.0554
73 Tyumen	0.0963	0.0508	0.1213	0.0927	0.1292	0.0420	0.0680	0.0361	0.0228	0.0860	0.0951
74 Udmurtiya	0.0404	0.0308	0.0453	-0.0373	-0.0420	-0.0370	0.0235	0.0325	0.0466	0.0018	0.0221
75 Ulyanovsk	0.0424	0.0440	-0.0357	0.0194	-0.0573	-0.0570	0.0471	0.0204	-0.0540	-0.0335	-0.0538
76 Vladimir	0.0869	0.0196	-0.0717	-0.0755	-0.1102	-0.0900	0.0626	0.0379	-0.0248	-0.0623	-0.1006
77 Volgograd	0.0816	0.0652	-0.0867	-0.0656	-0.1381	-0.0360	0.0549	0.0406	-0.0828	-0.0801	-0.0016
78 Vologda	0.0951	0.0611	0.0133	-0.0383	-0.1589	-0.1700	0.0341	0.0430	0.0446	-0.0164	-0.0414

79 Voronezh	0.0607	0.0539	-0.1167	-0.0733	0.0076	0.0450	0.0409	0.0190	-0.0603	-0.0401	-0.0222
80 Yakutiya	0.0239	0.0316	0.0133	-0.0031	-0.0013	-0.0780	0.0331	0.0466	-0.0155	-0.0250	0.0588
81 Yamalo-Nenets AO	0.1464	0.0788	0.0823	0.1505	0.2239	0.1290	0.1591	0.0389	0.1319	0.1358	0.2097
82 Yaroslavl	0.1229	0.0758	-0.0197	-0.1113	-0.2025	-0.1580	0.0542	0.0428	-0.0050	-0.0670	-0.0905
83 Zabaikal'skii krai	0.0560	0.0494	0.0053	-0.0155	-0.0601	-0.1430	0.0259	0.0611	0.0118	-0.0447	0.0211

Source: Calculated on the basis of data from official website of the Central Election Commission: <http://www.cikrf.ru> (last accessed 21 March 2017).